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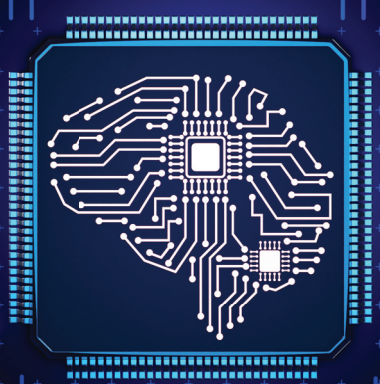

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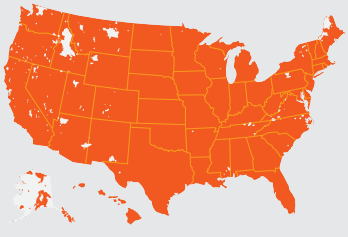

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View videos, read more stories and find resources at **legion.org**.

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 1.6 million members. These wartime veterans, working through more than 12,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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A foundation and a lifeline

Nelson Mandela said, "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." By that barometer, I am confident that The American Legion's soul is pure.

Our youth programs are the best in the nation, but it is The American Legion's Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF) in particular that helps young people most in need. Over the past decade, more than $6 million in temporary financial assistance has been provided to military and veteran families with minor children at home facing hardships; these one-time grants can pay for food, shelter, clothing and other necessities, and are funded by generous donations to VCF.

When members of the Coast Guard experienced a pay interruption during the 2019 government shutdown, the Legion quickly provided more than $1.1 million so families could pay for basic living expenses.

Vital assistance to families in need is only part of VCF's purpose. Like the name implies, the Veterans & Children Foundation also exists to serve those who served this nation. At any given time, more than 3,000 accredited American Legion service officers are helping some 750,000 veterans in filing for, and obtaining, the benefits they have earned. They do so free of charge and regardless of the veteran's membership status in the Legion. Funding to train these knowledgeable experts comes from – you guessed it – VCF.

Since the passage of the PACT Act, the number of veterans requiring assistance has skyrocketed. Benefits offered do little good if claims are lost to the bureaucracy. This is why a strong corps of trained service officers is so essential.

The Legion's VCF is a 501(c)(3), meaning donations are 100% tax-deductible. Safe and secure donations can be made online at **legion.org/donate**, or by mailing a check to the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation, P.O. Box 361210, Indianapolis, IN 46236-1210.

The next time you hear someone ask, "What does The American Legion do?", you can answer, "The Veterans & Children Foundation. That's what we do!"

THE AMERICAN Legion MAGAZINE
Veterans Strengthening America

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The American Legion (ISSN 0886-1234) is published monthly by The American Legion, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216. Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis, IN 46204 and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The American Legion, Data Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Canada Post International Publications Mail (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. PM40063731. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Station A, P.O. Box, Windsor ON N9A 6J5. Re-entered second-class mail matter at Manila Central Post Office dated Dec. 22, 1991.

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A Vote of No Confidence

Alan Greenblatt's article (October) is an even-handed assessment of state election officials' struggle to garner the trust of a divided electorate. Greenblatt properly credits the creation of mail-in voting to the military, citing presidential contests, including the 1864 election. Readers may be interested to know that according to historian John C. Waugh, Union soldiers overwhelmingly voted against their one-time commanding general, George McClellan, and for Abe Lincoln. Among the telling aspects of Greenblatt's analysis was that since the 2020 general election, while some red states enacted laws to restrict voter access, Kentucky enacted a bipartisan compromise that made it both easier to vote and harder to cheat.

David E. Balducchi, Springfield, Va.

Alan Greenblatt's article does a good job of explaining the lack of confidence in our elections. But he addresses only the symptoms, not the problem. I can speak only for myself but am willing to bet I am not alone in my thoughts. I have lost all confidence in our news media and don't know who to believe anymore.

Greenblatt wrote, "Given the absence of widespread voter fraud ...." How can I trust that statement? Who said it? Why should I believe it? I am not saying there was or wasn't, but how do I know? I certainly can't trust the media to factually report it. I listen to Fox News, CNN and MSNBC, and I don't trust any of them. They each have their own political agenda and therefore taint the facts to push their agenda.

I would love to see an article addressing this – and, more importantly, how to fix it. From where I sit, there is no coming back from this mistrust.

Vince Corry, Marlton, N.J.

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Envato

Centenarians, still serving

American Legion Past National Commander John P. "Jake" Comer, 91 (center), was installing new officers at **Cyril P. Morrisette Post 294 in Quincy, Mass.,** when he learned he was in the company of three members who had recently celebrated their 100th birthdays or soon will. Louis Malvesti (seated), a World War II Navy veteran, is a retired firefighter; Mildred Cox (right), who served as a Marine Corps stenographer during World War II, married a sailor in 1945 before working in the public school system and as head clerk in the Quincy Department of Veterans Services; and Frank Bellotti (left), a Navy officer in World War II, served as lieutenant governor and attorney general of Massachusetts. Photo courtesy Jake Comer

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Please accept my compliments on this article. It is an important topic for our country's future and deserves responsible discussion. I suspect you will receive no small amount of negative reaction and perhaps even some subscription cancellations, but I found the tenor and contents of the article in keeping with the journalistic standards and factual basis of your national and international affairs reporting.

Richard Finch, Philadelphia

Locally, we are trying to recruit Legionnaires to serve as election judges and clerks in Bexar County, Texas, on Election Day. We desperately need a strong American Legion presence at the polls. First, many poll workers are aging and no longer able to continue; make no mistake, being a poll worker is hard work. Second, there has been a rise in physical threats to harm poll workers, many of whom are female. Intimidated, they are resigning. We as Legionnaires – veterans, often with combat experience – do not scare easily. In my experience as an election judge, simply wearing my Legion shirt while serving at the polls reassures other workers.

Americanism is one of our central pillars. Legion posts should encourage members to contact their county elections administration department and volunteer to serve as poll workers. What we do today to protect our democratic tradition will ensure our children inherit a free, democratic country.

G.L. Lamborn, San Antonio

Lore of the Legion

As a Wisconsin veteran and member of Berens-Scribner American Legion Post 6, I enjoyed the Lore of the Legion on the Green Bay Packers (October). But I need to make a clarification regarding the reference to Lambeau Field. A new stadium was built in 1957, as noted, but the stadium was called City Stadium until it was renamed in 1965. Curly Lambeau was a player and coach for the Packers for 31 years, ending in 1949. He died in 1965, and two months later, City Stadium was officially renamed Lambeau Field.

I got out of the Army on Oct. 26, 1967, and two months later was in attendance at the famous Ice Bowl on Dec. 31 at Lambeau.

Mark Wysocki, Stevens Point, Wis.

THE PLAYLIST

American Legion videos you don't want to miss.

Photo by Renny Lewis

New Jersey American Legion post welcomes REGIMENT Gaming
Delivery of custom-built computer raises awareness about suicide prevention, attracts new members.

Letting people know they're not alone
Past National Commander David K. Rehbein explains the importance of Buddy Checks now that more than 1 million veterans have been reached.

Commander's opening remarks
National Commander Dan Seehafer lays out priorities to The American Legion's National Executive Committee at the start of the Fall Meetings.

Visit **legion.org/magazine/videos** or subscribe to The American Legion's YouTube channel to see, show and share other American Legion videos.

3 Hours to go before a federal government shutdown Sept. 30, averted when Congress approved a 45-day stopgap budget. Had a shutdown occurred, many VA functions and other federal services would have halted, including pay for U.S. military personnel. American Legion National Commander Dan Seehafer called on Congress to pass the Pay Our Troops Act, which would protect members of the armed forces in the event of government shutdown. Wikimedia Commons

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Whereas ...

The Navy has determined that a shortage of skilled workers in five critical disciplines – welding, computer numerical control machining, metrology/quality control, non-destructive testing and additive manufacturing – are causing submarine production to fall behind schedule ...

A collaborative effort between a collective group of government and civilian organizations known as Team Submarine, the Submarine Industrial Base Program, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense Industrial Analysis and Sustainment (IBAS) Program Office have partnered to establish the Accelerated Training in Defense Manufacturing (ATDM) program, specifically to train workers in these critical areas ...

By 2025 it is planned that ATDM will train 800 to 1,000 skilled workers per year, with each receiving 600+ hours of training over 16 weeks and costs for current and near-term students funded by the government ...

Programs like ATDM provide an opportunity for training and employment for not only recently discharged veterans but veterans in general ...

Be it resolved,

That The American Legion wholeheartedly support efforts to identify and recruit individuals for participation in the ATDM program, and encourage the collaborating companies to ensure the recruiting of prospective enrollees be a priority ...

That DoD and the other service branches partner with the members of the national defense industrial base to develop similar programs in support of their critical needs for a specialized workforce.

Passed, American Legion National National Convention, Aug. 29-31, 2023

Women heroes of Afghanistan war

Two women veterans, an American and an Afghan native who both fought the Taliban, shared their stories recently on The American Legion's award-winning Tango Alpha Lima podcast.

Army veteran Rebekah Edmondson served 10 years and deployed to Afghanistan several times to support the Cultural Support Team (CST). Edmondson, a member of **PFC Ralph H. Johnson American Legion Post 147 in Charleston, S.C.,** helped train Afghan women in the war effort.

Mahnaz Akbari served 10 years in Afghan special forces as the Female Tactical Platoon (FTP) commander. She joined the FTP in 2011, completing more than 150 night raids with Afghan and U.S. soldiers, and was selected FTP commander in early 2014. After the fall of Kabul, Akbari was among more than 40 FTPs who made it to the United States. Now she helps other FTPs resettle here.

Both women took circuitous routes before joining the military; Edmondson worked as a tattoo artist in Las Vegas, while Akbari taught calligraphy.

Topics covered in the episode include:

- An issue Akbari encountered when she first tried to join the military. "You're too skinny," she was told, "because this mission is too dangerous."
- Their missions. "Bullets would end up flying and zipping past your head often," Edmondson said. "That was still a very real threat even if they didn't know exactly where you were at."
- How CST was designed to fill a gap in gaining intelligence from Afghan women and children encountered during special operations. "In Afghanistan and (other) Islamic countries, to do these kinds of missions it's important to have females," Akbari said, noting that female soldiers would find SIM cards and other evidence on the women they were searching. "I always say it was impossible to do these without CSTs and FTPs because they are the person who gathers the evidence, the person who actually finds the target."

Check out this episode, which is among more than 200 Tango Alpha Lima podcasts available in audio and video formats, at **legion.org/tangoalphalima**.

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Santa gets a little help from Pennsylvania Legion Family

The American Legion Department of Pennsylvania's Lend Lease program allows participating posts to provide short-term, no-interest loans to local youth organizations, such as Scouting units. The money underwrites the cost of raw materials used in the assembly of holiday wreaths. Posts open their doors for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other youth program participants to assemble holiday wreaths; under prearranged agreements, local cemeteries and businesses purchase the products. Upon completion of the sale, the loan provided by the Legion is paid back in full, and the net profit accrues to the youth organization.

Now in its eighth year, the program was largely inspired by the 1941 Lend-Lease Act. Profits accruing to the organizations have ranged from $510 to $2,100. This year, participants have an opportunity to include commercial and retail sales in achieving their fundraising goals. The American Legion continues to underwrite community programs that encourage youth citizenship and community involvement. Those who served continue to serve.

– Submitted by Tom Shallow, SAL Detachment of Pennsylvania Americanism chairman

Buddy Checks take flight

Consolidated post reports show that American Legion Buddy Checks – first introduced in March 2019 – have been steadily climbing. While a national resolution encourages Buddy Check activities during Veterans Week in November and around the Legion's birthday in mid-March, many posts conduct them more often. In their first four years, Buddy Checks have reached 1,090,012 veterans, according to the reports.

Year	Posts reporting Buddy Check operations	Veterans reached
2023	4,456	293,498
2022	4,077	312,768
2021	3,795	234,601
2020	3,683	249,145

Photo by Hilary Ott

Be the One the first of every month

Per an American Legion resolution, the first of each month is Be the One Day. As posts plan activities for 2024, they're encouraged to promote the Legion's initiative to reduce the number of veteran suicides. Examples of ways posts can participate include:

Coordinate a walk, run and/or hike. Fitness is an integral part of dealing with the challenges of PTSD. Such events build camaraderie and engage younger eligible members.

Conduct Buddy Checks. Any time of the month is a good time for a wellness check on veterans. Planning a Buddy Check event for the first day of the month also underscores the Legion's commitment to the care of our veterans.

Lead a community resource fair, symposium or similar awareness event. American Legion posts in Illinois, Massachusetts and other states have brought together community leaders to share information about local resources available to those struggling with PTSD, TBI, addiction, suicide ideation and other issues.

Download, listen to and/or share The American Legion's special monthly podcast dedicated to Be the One. A new episode drops on the first day of each month. Subscribe at Apple Podcasts and other major podcast hosting sites.

Visit **betheone.org** for resources, videos and more. Share how your post is contributing to the Be the One mission at **legiontown.org**.

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15 mg / 0.1 mL

If you've been diagnosed with Geographic Atrophy (GA)

Act now to slow GA with SYFOVRE

What is SYFOVRE?

SYFOVRE is a prescription eye injection, used to treat geographic atrophy (GA), the dry advanced form of age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about SYFOVRE?

Who should NOT receive SYFOVRE?

Do not receive SYFOVRE if you have an infection in or around your eye, or have active swelling in or around your eye that may include pain and redness.

SYFOVRE can cause serious side effects:

- Eye infection (endophthalmitis) or separation of layers of the retina (retinal detachment)

Please see additional Important Safety Information and Brief Summary on the following pages.

SYFOVRE is the first FDA–approved treatment proven to slow GA lesion growth

GA is an advanced form of AMD and can lead to irreversible vision loss that cannot be corrected with eyeglasses or surgery.

The symptoms of GA affect everyone differently but signs may include:

Straight lines that appear wavy

Difficulty seeing in low light

Missing or blurry spots in the center of your vision

Slowing lesion growth can delay the progression of GA. Talk to your eye doctor today to see if SYFOVRE may be right for you and visit KnowSYFOVRE.com to learn more.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (CONT'D)

SYFOVRE can cause serious side effects (cont'd):

- Call your healthcare provider right away if you have redness of the eye, eye pain, increased discomfort, worsening eye redness, blurred or decreased vision, an increased number of small specks floating in your vision, flashes of light, or increased sensitivity to light
- Risk of developing wet AMD. You should be monitored for signs of wet AMD and you should report any symptoms (eg, visual distortion, deterioration in vision, black spots, loss of central vision) to your healthcare provider
- Episodes of eye inflammation. You should report any symptoms (eg, pain or discomfort, redness, swelling, or sensitivity to light, small specks floating in your vision, changes in vision) to your healthcare provider

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (CONT'D)

SYFOVRE can cause serious side effects (cont'd):

- Increase in eye pressure within minutes of the injection. Your healthcare provider will monitor this after each injection

Before receiving SYFOVRE:

- **Tell your healthcare provider if any of the following applies to you:**
  - If you have a history of seeing flashes of light or small specks floating in your vision and if you have a sudden increase of size and number of these specks
  - If you have high pressure in the eye or if you have glaucoma
- **Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions,** including
  - If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, think you may be pregnant, or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor for advice before taking this medicine
- **Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take,** including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements

What should I avoid while receiving SYFOVRE?

- After an injection or an eye exam, your eyesight may temporarily be impaired. Do not drive or use machinery until your vision recovers

What are the most common side effects of SYFOVRE?

- Eye discomfort
- Wet age-related macular degeneration
- Small specks floating in vision
- Blood in the white of the eye

These are not all the possible side effects of SYFOVRE. Tell your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at **1-800-FDA-1088** or **www.fda.gov/medwatch.**

Please see additional Important Safety Information on the previous pages and Brief Summary on the adjacent page.

SYFOVRE®
(pegcetacoplan injection)
15 mg / 0.1 mL

Pronunciation: **SIE • FO • VREE**

Important facts about SYFOVRE
This summary contains risk and safety information for patients about SYFOVRE. It does not include all the information about SYFOVRE and does not take the place of talking to your eye doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

What is SYFOVRE?
SYFOVRE is a prescription eye injection, used to treat geographic atrophy (GA), the dry advanced form of age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

How is SYFOVRE given?
SYFOVRE is an injection administered by your eye doctor into the eye.

What is the most important information I should know about SYFOVRE?

Who should NOT receive SYFOVRE?
Do not receive SYFOVRE if you have an infection in or around your eye or have active swelling in or around your eye that may include pain and redness.

SYFOVRE can cause serious side effects:
Injection into the eye with SYFOVRE can result in an infection in the eye or retinal detachment (separation of retina from back of the eye) can occur.

- Call your healthcare provider right away if you have redness of the eye, eye pain, increased discomfort, worsening eye redness, blurred or decreased vision, an increased number of small specks floating in your vision, flashes of light, or increased sensitivity to light

Risk of developing wet AMD. You should be monitored for signs of wet AMD and you should report any symptoms (eg, visual distortion, deterioration in vision, black spots, loss of central vision) to your healthcare provider.

Episodes of eye inflammation. You should report any symptoms (eg, pain or discomfort, redness, swelling, or sensitivity to light, small specks floating in your vision, changes in vision) to your healthcare provider.

Increase in eye pressure within minutes of the injection. Your healthcare provider will monitor this after each injection.

Before receiving SYFOVRE:
Tell your healthcare provider if any of the following applies to you:

- If you have a history of seeing flashes of light or small specks floating in your vision and if you have a sudden increase of size and number of these specks
- If you have high pressure in the eye or if you have glaucoma

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. If you think you may be pregnant, or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor for advice before taking this medicine.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

What should I avoid while receiving SYFOVRE?
After an injection with SYFOVRE or an eye exam, your eyesight may temporarily be impaired. Do not drive or use machinery until your vision recovers.

What are the most common side effects of SYFOVRE?
- Eye discomfort
- Wet age-related macular degeneration
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Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or www.fda.gov/medwatch.

Where can I learn more about SYFOVRE?
For a more comprehensive review of SYFOVRE safety and risk information, talk to your healthcare provider and see the full Prescribing Information at SYFOVRE.com.

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HEALTH & FITNESS BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL

Holiday gift guide

In the spirit of the season, here are some ideas for gifts to help loved ones achieve healthier outcomes, mental wellness and improved fitness:

WHOOP ($239 annual subscription, with monthly payment options) A wearable tracking device that calculates overall recovery based on recent exercise, heart rate and sleep quality. With a paid membership, you receive a free WHOOP 4.0 with a lifetime warranty, access to the app for personalized insights, built-in coaching features, and weekly and monthly performance reports. ***whoop.com***

Oura Ring (from $299, $5.99 for a monthly membership) Provides tracking and metrics in fitness, stress, sleep and health through an app. Available in five finishes. ***ouraring.com***

Pique Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea ($58) 100% organic, ceremonial-grade and quadruple toxin-screened. It contains epigallocatechin gallate, chlorophyll, L-theanine, catechins and caffeine for radiant skin, healthy metabolism and calm energy. Available in individual sachets or a 35-serving tin. ***piquelife.com***

AG1 ($79 monthly subscription or $99 per bag) A powdered supplement with 75 high-quality vitamins, minerals and whole-food-sourced nutrients. ***drinkag1.com***

ARMRA Colostrum supplement ($39.99) Colostrum's immune-boosting properties can strengthen hair, skin, lung and gut barriers; rebuild your microbiome; and activate cellular health and performance. ***tryarmra.com***

Naked Grass Fed Whey Protein ($75.99 per 5 lb. bag) Sourced from small Northern California and Idaho dairy farms with cows that are grass-fed, free-roaming and raised without growth hormones, this protein supplement is free of additives and artificial sweeteners. ***nakednutrition.com***

Bulletproof MCT Oil (16 oz. $15.50, 32 oz. $29.95) Made from 100% coconut oil, MCT oil rapidly converts into ketones to give you long-lasting energy, boost metabolism and fuel your brain. ***bulletproof.com***

Danger Coffee ($24.95) Uses a "remineralizing" process to deliver more than 50 trace minerals and electrolytes to your cells. Choose whole-bean or ground bags in medium, dark roast and decaf. ***dangercoffee.com***

Weighted vest (from $27.99)
Rev up your runs, walks and hikes by adding extra weight to increase your calorie burn and improve your cardiovascular and muscular health. Amazon has a variety of weights ranging from 6 to 30 pounds, with adjustable sizes for men and women. ***amazon.com***

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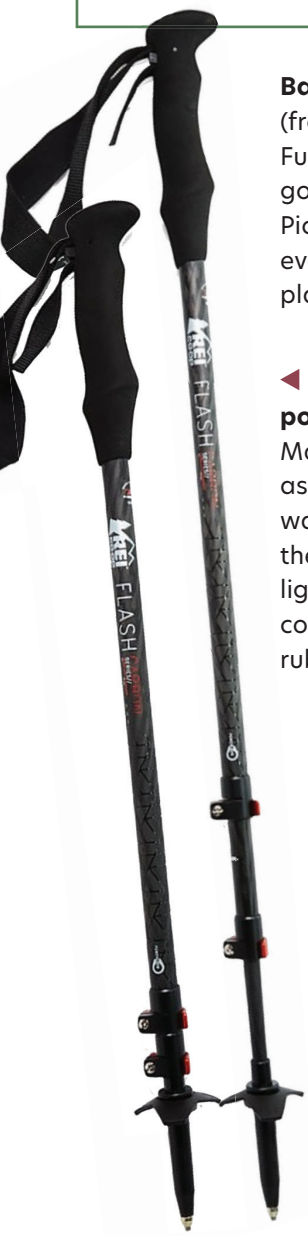

Baddle Pickleball set
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REI adjustable trekking poles (from $30)
Made specifically for assistance and stability for walking, hiking and trekking, these poles are made with lightweight aluminum, and come with wrist wraps and rubber handles. ***rei.com***

Nodpod ($38)
A weighted blanket for your eyes to help you block light and reduce stress. Available in a variety of colors. ***nodpod.com***

Army veteran Jennifer Campbell is a certified personal trainer with a master's degree in nutrition education. She is past commander of the California American Legion's 24th District and Hollywood Post 43.

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

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Immunotherapy is a growing part of today's cancer treatment paradigm.

BY BETH W. ORENSTEIN

While not yet used as widely as surgery, chemotherapy or radiation, immunotherapy as a form of cancer treatment is increasing as new and promising drugs are developed.

Immunotherapy draws on the power of your body's immune system to prevent, control and hopefully eliminate cancer. The Food and Drug Administration has approved two types: cellular immunotherapy and immune checkpoint inhibitors.

Cellular immunotherapies are predominantly used in hematologic (blood) cancers, particularly leukemias, says Christina Annunziata, an oncologist and senior vice president of the American Cancer Society. Immune checkpoint inhibitors are used in hematologic cancers and solid tumors (epithelial cancers). These include head and neck, lung, colon, rectal, endometrial, cervical and liver cancers, or any cancer with evidence of deficiency in a particular pathway of DNA repair (called "mismatch repair").

Immunotherapy – particularly the inhibitors – can be used by itself, but is more common in combination with chemotherapy and after surgery, both in initial treatment and after a relapse. In most instances where immunotherapy is approved by the FDA, it has been shown to increase rates of "progression-free" and overall survival, Annunziata says.

Immune checkpoint inhibitors are fairly safe but can have immune-related side effects, include hypothyroidism, rash or inflammation of organs such as the liver, intestines or kidneys. Most are reversible once the drugs are stopped, but some can persist (particularly hypothyroidism, which is treatable with replacement thyroid hormone). Cellular immunotherapies can cause a side effect called "cytokine release syndrome," which is also treatable but requires close monitoring in the hospital.

Beth W. Orenstein of Northampton, Pa., is a freelance medical writer and regular contributor to Living Well.

Not always 'green'

Scores of everyday cleaning products – even so-called green products – emit hazardous volatile organic compounds (VOCs), according to an Environmental Working Group study published in the journal *Chemosphere*.

As HealthDay reports, the study looked at multipurpose cleaners, glass cleaners and air fresheners. Researchers detected 530 unique VOCs, including 193 that could damage the respiratory system, increase cancer risk, and/or increase risk of developmental and reproductive problems.

Products labeled "green" were found to emit about half as many VOCs, and fragrance-free options emitted nearly eight times fewer VOCs than conventional cleaners.

Envato

According to the study, VOCs have been associated with a higher incidence of several breathing-related conditions. "Those in the cleaning industry have a 50% higher asthma risk," HealthDay reports. "They also have a 43% higher risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD. Women who do this work also have a greater risk of lung cancer." In addition, higher use of certain indoor cleaners appears to affect fetuses and infants, and is associated with a greater risk of asthma and wheezing in childhood.

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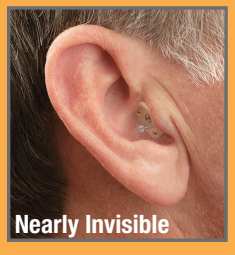

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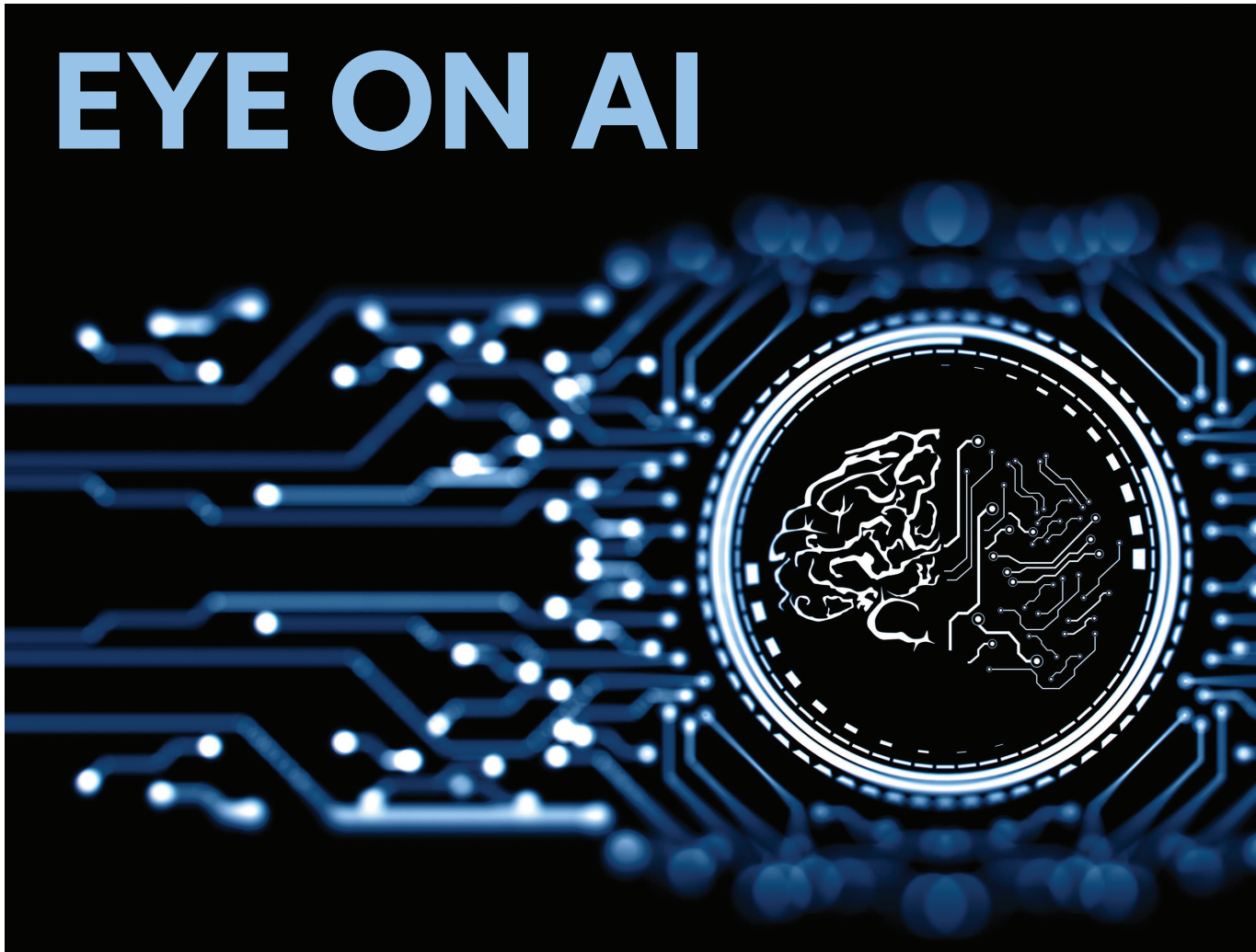


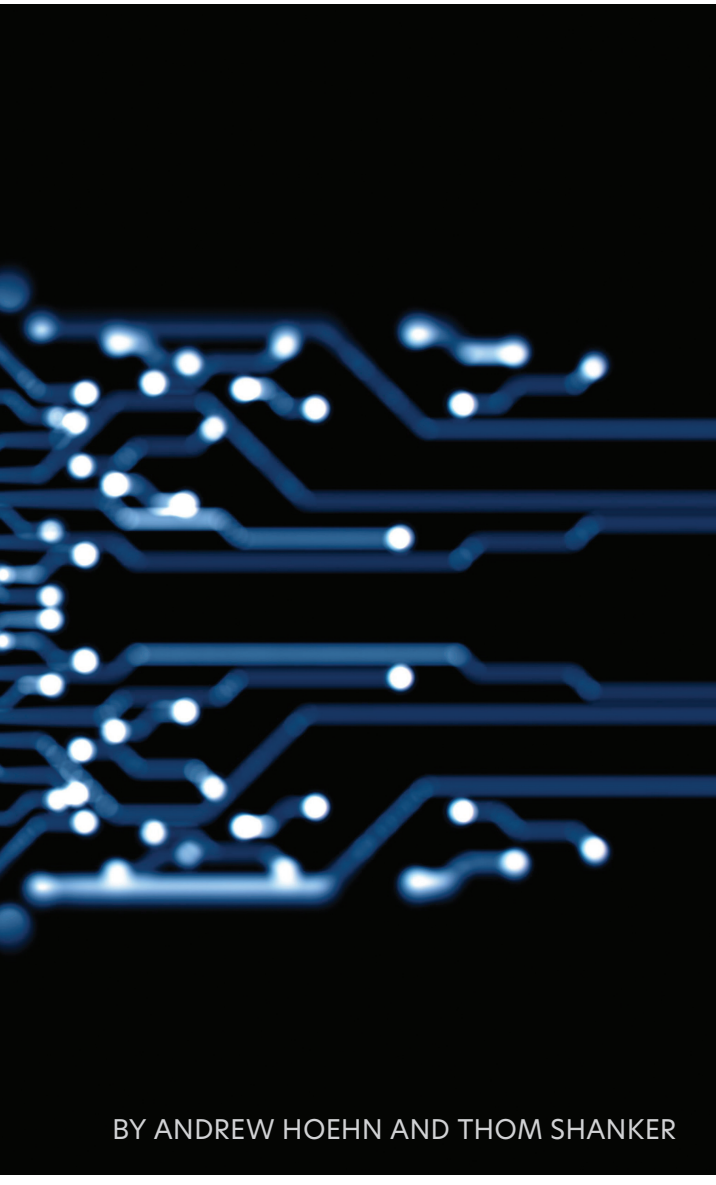
America needs a national security apparatus that keeps pace with today's biggest threat.

This essay is adapted from "Age of Danger: Keeping America Safe in an Era of New Superpowers, New Weapons, and New Threats," by Andrew Hoehn and Thom Shanker (Hachette Books, 2023).

We've seen the movies about sentient, autonomous killer robots delivering judgment to the human race. We've watched TV shows about software programs, including those designed to improve our lives, mutating into computer viruses that empty our bank accounts, crash our power grids and take over our weapons systems – and our lives. Even in the real world, enemy states have hacked U.S. government personnel systems and industrial databases, and criminal groups – perhaps abetted by an adversary government – have shut down gas pipelines.

Such threats are a constant worry because of the "Wild West" nature of the digital world. But there is a particular element of the cyber domain that should cause us special concern, where digits have brains – what is known as artificial intelligence, or AI.

Artificial intelligence refers to computers, and computer-assisted systems or machines, being able to learn, analyze and act in ways we have always believed only humans can – and, perhaps someday, even improve themselves and give themselves orders for activities (good or bad)



BY ANDREW HOEHN AND THOM SHANKER

The terms **cyber** and **artificial intelligence** are related but distinct. **Cyber** refers to all things regarding computers, information technology, the internet and virtual reality. **Artificial intelligence** refers to computers, software and data systems that do things we have always thought only humans could do: writing and talking, visual and verbal recognition, information sorting, data analysis – and decision-making.

never imagined by the humans who designed, programmed and built them.

Unfortunately, recent public discussion of AI has been more superficial. Will AI do my grandkid's homework? Will it put Americans out of work? Those are real-world problems, but they do not get anywhere close to real threats – the kind that involve keeping our nation safe.

Since the advent of modern computing, humans have been enamored with the idea of computers with brains – computers that cannot only calculate but reason on their own. There were discussions of artificial intelligence in the 1950s, and with each decade the issue has taken on more and more importance.

Many remember the doomsday computer from "Dr. Strangelove" that would launch the entire Soviet nuclear arsenal to obliterate the United States should the Kremlin ever be attacked – with no way to pull the plug, even if the launch were unintended or limited. Or the HAL 9000 computer from "2001: A Space Odyssey" that decides the ship's crew is a danger to its mission and starts to kill off the astronauts.

Today, the promise of artificial intelligence has become real. If the world is not now populated with HALs, it could be soon. It's just one more scary thing out there for us to worry about as we consider how to protect and defend our nation.

In "Age of Danger: Keeping America Safe in an Era of New Superpowers, New Weapons, and New Threats," we make the case that after 9/11, the United States had a singular focus on counterterrorism for too long. We lost sight of lots of rising threats. They are now upon us, and the significant threat of AI is among those for which we are not ready.

To be fair, AI is already a part of our lives, and in seamless ways we hardly notice. Do you have a subscription to Netflix or Hulu, rent movies on Amazon or stream music on Spotify? If so, you know that when you log in you are greeted with a stream of recommended movies, TV shows or songs. That is the AI system within these platforms looking at your past selections and, applying AI reasoning, coming up with suggestions it thinks you will enjoy.

And while battlefields are not yet filled with "Terminator"-style robots fighting and killing and making their own command decisions, artificial intelligence already is very much a part of modern combat.

There's a military axiom: "Speed kills." If you see first, if you assess first, if you decide first, if you act first, you have an incredible advantage.

This is already part of U.S. military hardware, including the Patriot anti-missile batteries we've given to Ukraine. With incoming enemy missiles, no human has time to whip out an iPad or abacus and calculate trajectories and the proper launch angle to blow it out of the sky. So Patriots are programmed to respond within that critical time window, and without a human doing much. The military calls it "eyes on, hands off."

Here's the scary part: As weapons get faster – like hypersonic missiles under development by China and Russia, or cyber attacks that can reach us at internet speeds – humans cannot be counted on to act fast enough. You have put your best human intellectual power into these machines and hope they respond accurately and correctly. But as we know, humans make mistakes. In combat, civilian hospitals accidentally get blown up. Innocents accidentally get killed. How do we prevent human error from going into a program that allows a machine to defend us at network speed, far faster than a human can?

The best minds in the private sector and the Pentagon are asking this question.

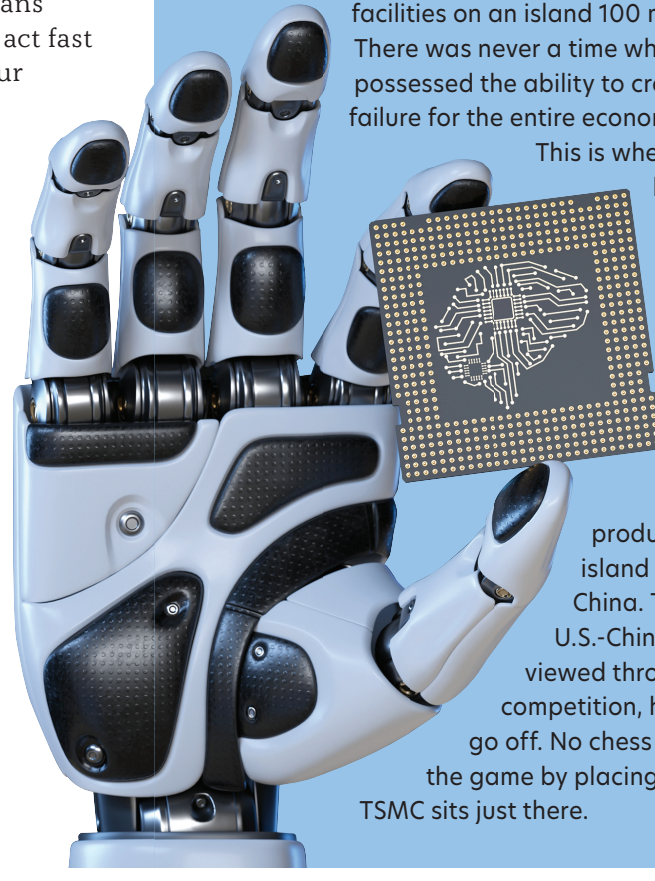
Chip wars

The new global competition is in microchips, which are required for computers, communications systems and cars. They are essential to our economy.

As the dominant producer of semiconductor chips, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) is responsible for more than 55% of the total semiconductor market. When COVID-19 slowed auto sales, the semiconductor industry shifted production to consumer goods, leaving the auto industry without needed chips when it swung back into production.

TSMC's production has since rebounded, but careful watchers wonder what would happen if it were damaged or destroyed in a fight over Taiwan, or if distribution would be limited if China took control of Taiwan the way it did with Hong Kong. What effect would that have on the global economy and America's ability to keep its own economy churning?

The implications are extraordinary. The 40-year Cold War was a whole-of-nation effort, involving not just the U.S. government and military but the entire fabric of U.S. society. Despite the totality of the contest and the enormity of effort of two major superpowers, there was never a time when the Soviet Union could deliver a devastating blow to the U.S. economy by attacking a single set of production facilities on an island 100 miles from its border. There was never a time when either party possessed the ability to create a single point of failure for the entire economic system.



This is where the worlds of business and national security collide. As long as the United States and China were engaged in a cooperative effort to grow the global economy, there was little concern about a key production node on an island in close proximity to China. The moment the U.S.-China relationship is viewed through the lens of competition, however, alarm bells go off. No chess player would begin the game by placing their king in check. TSMC sits just there.

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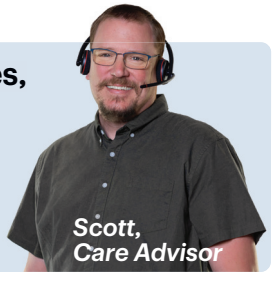

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In the civilian world, autonomy already is used – sometimes with little notice and little concern – in aircraft flight-control systems and self-driving cars now under development. And AI may prove a great boon to humanity if it can be used to diagnose illnesses and research cures faster than people.

At this moment, "AI is 10% of what it's going to be," explained Eric Schmidt, former CEO of Google, who spoke with us from his offices in northern Virginia. The one-time businessman is now focused on philanthropy and advising the U.S. government on how to prepare for the risks and benefits presented by artificial intelligence.

In our discussion, Schmidt focused on the more treacherous side of AI. He was not describing how AI will beat the world's chess masters or how it might be used to compose music. Nor was the world he described one in which every computer has the potential for creative thought, either.

Rather, Schmidt focused on how a handful of computers will possess the ability to produce massive good or massive harm. More than once, he said, "We're in the 10%. There's 90% ahead of us."

He sees a future in which computers will act like humans and decide for themselves what they want to do. "At some point – some people are saying 20 years, but not soon – there will be systems you can talk to that will talk back to you, and unlike current systems, they'll be able to choose their objective function. In other words, they'll decide what they want to work on."

Schmidt quickly corrected himself. "'They' is a misnomer. 'They' are computers, not humans. It will decide what it wants to work on."

There will not be a lot of these computers because they will be very expensive to build and operate. The systems Schmidt describes won't be the result of creative minds in a garage somewhere building a new computer. This won't be another Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. They will be the purview of states.

His scenario is chilling: "So let's say there'll be 10 computers. I'll make up a number. And now say there's two or three in China, two or three in the United States, one in Israel, one in Europe, maybe one in Russia. Who knows?"

Schmidt went on, "What will be the nature of access to that computer? Because with this kind of computer you could say, 'I want to know, I want you to invent a way to kill 1 million people who are not my race.' OK, so you say, 'Well, it's obvious that what you should do is have a front end that doesn't allow that query.' OK, so we'll ban that query. But since it's a general conversational system, the average person can keep trying until they get it to actually understand what they want and then it will do it."

Keep asking until the computer responds, no matter how it was designed. Sounds again like human error, not computer error.

"So, you have a proliferation problem as follows. You have to figure out how to keep this

A 'cyber Pearl Harbor'

For years, U.S. national security leaders and analysts have warned of a looming "cyber Pearl Harbor." Is the threat real? History is our guide.

If this were 2012, some would say the most significant threat is an attack crippling our nation's electrical grid, water supply or banking system. If this were 2014, it's North Korea hacking into corporate computers, such as Sony. If this were 2016, some would cite Russian hacking to disrupt U.S. elections and undermine our democracy. And if this were 2021, the biggest threat is perceived to be cyber criminals, likely abetted by Russia, using ransomware to shut down a critical pipeline, sending gas prices up and the economy spiraling in the opposite direction.

Or maybe the "cyber Pearl Harbor" sneak attack has already happened – not as a lightning strike but as the slow and patient infiltration by China of private-sector computer systems, including defense contractors, to steal intellectual property worth billions of dollars, a move that likely has saved China years of military research and development.

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Centuries ago, Persians, Tibetans and Mayans considered turquoise a gemstone of the heavens, believing the striking blue stones were sacred pieces of sky. Today, the rarest and most valuable turquoise is found in the American Southwest— but the future of the blue beauty is unclear.

On a recent trip to Tucson, we spoke with fourth generation turquoise traders who explained that less than five percent of turquoise mined worldwide can be set into jewelry and only about twenty mines in the Southwest supply gem-quality turquoise. Once a thriving industry, many Southwest mines have run dry and are now closed.

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capability out of the hands of bad people, and you also have to deter its use by bad governance. So, let's assume, for example, that North Korea steals the China one, which it does through some relatively easy mechanism. They managed to get it into North Korea, they managed to turn it on, and now they're busy trying to use it. Well, what is the deterrence architecture to prevent them from turning it on? These questions are completely unexplored."

In a way, Schmidt is replaying the early years of the nuclear era, but with more deliberate thought. It was nearly a decade into the nuclear era before the discipline of nuclear deterrence emerged, before we had terms like second-strike stability and mutually assured destruction (MAD), before "Dr. Strangelove" became part of the lexicon.

Schmidt sees a potentially frightening future emerging, and he wants to do the hard work now before we stumble into the abyss. Humans are devious enough. Schmidt is not eager to turn computers loose on the darkest human thoughts: "They're more powerful, they have more data, they can begin to do things we haven't figured out how to prevent yet."

Our national security machine – that apparatus that helps us keep the United States safe – is not ready for the AI machine.

Schmidt isn't alone in issuing a warning. In 2018, Kai-Fu Lee wrote a book titled "AI Superpowers." Lee grew up in Taiwan and has deep roots in the technology industry and Silicon Valley. He headed Google China until Google decided to leave China. He doesn't dispute Schmidt's views on AI in the modern world – that we have seen only 10% of its potential – but believes that China is bringing certain advantages to the competition.

Lee compares AI's development with the early days of electricity. Once Thomas Edison harnessed electricity, there was no telling what it would do to change modern life. Bringing light to darkness was one thing; bringing power to machines was another. Little would Edison have guessed that electricity would eventually be used to refrigerate food, wash and dry clothing, move people from the ground to the top of the tallest buildings in the world, move people across cities in trains, regulate traffic and ultimately provide the energy for human-like thought.

Lee goes on to discuss AI's larger state of play in the world, what he describes as "deep learning." He notes this was once a distinct U.S. advantage. The big ideas in the world of AI were coming out of the United States and Canada, during what he calls the period of discovery. We are now in a period of implementation. We know what computers can do, and there has been a shift in the larger field.

"Today," he writes, "successful AI algorithms need three things: big data, computing power and the work of strong – but not necessarily elite – AI algorithm engineers."

In each of these areas, China has a distinct edge, Lee believes. In prior technological revolutions, advantage belonged to the inventors, the first movers who possessed the skill and know-how and put them to use. Lee sees no such advantage this time. He notes with amusement, "When asked how far China lags behind Silicon Valley in artificial intelligence research, some Chinese entrepreneurs jokingly answer '16 hours,' the time difference between California and Beijing."

With these pieces in place, Lee predicts China will soon match or overtake the United States in developing and deploying artificial intelligence. He adds, "That lead in AI deployment will translate into productivity gains on a scale not seen since the Industrial Revolution."

Already there are dire predictions for the U.S. workforce – that within 15 years AI could replace up to 50% of U.S. jobs. This may not translate into 50% unemployment, because interventions of various forms will slow many of the losses. But the losses will be significant nonetheless. And China faces similar challenges.

Recall the Sputnik moment, when our Soviet adversary was first to launch a satellite into space. All it did was send a "beep" signal, but it terrorized schoolchildren and our national leaders. Lee writes of China's own Sputnik moment in 2017, when teenager Ke Jie was pitted against AlphaGo, an AI powerhouse

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supported by Google. Ke was China's premier player of the ancient game of Go, which is played on a 19-by-19 lined board with stones. He was not simply bested by a thinking machine; he was thoroughly dismantled. China's leaders realized then that AI was a competition China had to win.

Returning to Schmidt, he and other technologists served on the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI), which issued a 600+ page report – including appendices – in late 2021. The report has the feel of many commission reports – lots of facts and figures, numerous recommendations. It's also full of warnings from serious people and a call to action – to America's leaders and the American people. The report focuses on talent, technology, intellectual property and many other topics.

What the report is really about is waking America from its slumber.

We are fortunate that the AI revolution is not a strategic surprise. It is not a Pearl Harbor. We are experiencing its impact in our daily lives and can anticipate how research progress will translate into real-world applications before we have to confront the full national security ramifications. This commission can warn of national security challenges and articulate the benefits, rather than explain why previous warnings were ignored and opportunities were missed. We still have a window to make the changes to build a safer and better future.

Yet the pace of AI innovation is not flat; it is accelerating. If the United States does not act, it will likely lose its leadership position in AI to China in the next decade and become more vulnerable to a spectrum of AI-enabled threats from a host of state and non-state actors.

The NSCAI report lists multiple concerns and remedies, but one particular observation stands out: "The best human operator cannot defend against multiple machines making thousands of maneuvers per second potentially moving at hypersonic speeds and orchestrated by AI across domains. Humans cannot be everywhere at once, but software can."

Technologists, including Schmidt, want the software to be in American hands, and they know the United States can lead. They also know the machinery isn't yet in place for this to happen and that time is short to get it in place.

Their concern? The U.S. government still operates at human speed, not machine speed. Adopting AI requires profound adjustments in our national security business practices, organizational cultures and mindsets from the tactical to the strategic – from the battlefield to the Pentagon.

The government lags behind the commercial state of the art in most AI categories, including basic business automation. It suffers technical deficits ranging from digital workforce shortages to inadequate acquisition plans, insufficient network architecture and weak data practices. And bureaucracy is thwarting better partnerships with AI leaders in the private sector that could help.

The government must become a better customer and a better partner. National security innovation, in the absence of an impetus like a major war or terrorist attack, will require strong leadership.

NSCAI wants to build a national security apparatus that takes us into the future, not replicate one from the past. It is not about adopting technology or hiring digitally savvy personnel, but a new mindset. Like the earliest days of the nuclear era, the country's best minds are needed to support an urgent national cause, and the institutions that surround them need to adapt so they can contend with new problems at the speed at which they are coming.

There is very little that is slow in the world of cyber or AI except the institutions we have created to deal with the threat. The problems are coming at us at light speed, 186,000 miles per second. We need a national security system that can move at that speed, too.

Andrew Hoehn is the RAND Corporation's senior vice president for research and analysis; he formerly served as a top strategist for the Department of Defense. Thom Shanker is director of the Project for Media and National Security at George Washington University; he previously was a New York Times *reporter and editor.*

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VA Secretary Denis McDonough speaks to the Legion's 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., on Aug. 29.
Photo by Hilary Ott

Eyes Forward

VA secretary assesses progress, future of veteran care.

BY HENRY HOWARD

The American Legion and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) share common priorities, including working to reduce the number of veterans who die by suicide, encouraging wellness checks on veterans and other methods of supporting those who served their nation with honor.

In this exclusive interview, VA Secretary Denis McDonough discussed key initiatives, the Legion's role and more.

Tell us about some key VA initiatives to help reduce the number of veterans lost to suicide.

This is our No. 1 clinical priority every day of every week, of every month, of every year.

First, if you're a veteran in crisis and you want to see a provider, whether you're enrolled at VA or not, the Veterans' COMPACT (Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment) Act allows you to go to a VA hospital or another hospital and get that emergency care. And we'll make sure we pay for that. In less than a year, 32,469 veterans have taken advantage of it. If you need to see somebody in crisis, don't wait.

Second, if you're in crisis and you're far from a hospital, pick up a phone and call us. Dial **988 and press 1**. We'll get you in touch with mental health professionals if that's what you need.

Third, you may not be in crisis now, or you might be a family member and just want to be prepared in the event there might be a crisis. In which case, what we say is, "Don't wait, reach out, and reach out now." Visit us at **va.gov/reach**. You'll see useful information, tips, contacts we've developed with our mental health professionals, to make sure people are prepared now in the event a crisis comes later.

It's natural to find oneself wrestling with mental health challenges. You don't have to wrestle alone. Family members, you don't have to wrestle alone if your vet is struggling.

Those efforts correlate to The American Legion's Be the One mission, which is empowering veterans, servicemembers, their family members, anyone, to "be the one" if a veteran's life is at risk. What does it mean to have the Legion make this its top priority?

With Be the One, the Legion – as a strong national and community leader – is challenging not just its members, but everybody, to "be the one." To be there for our veterans. To keep your eyes peeled. To make sure you're the one who reaches out and checks on our veterans.

That's exactly what we need, which is every community across the country looking out for our vets. Every one of us not only has the obligation to, but can be, that pivotal

1920s Style for a 1920s Price

It was a warm summer afternoon and my wife and I were mingling with the best of them. The occasion was a 1920s-themed party, and everyone was dressed to the nines. Parked on the manse's circular driveway was a beautiful classic convertible. It was here that I got the idea for our new 1920s Retrograde Watch.

Never ones to miss an opportunity, we carefully steadied our glasses of bubbly and climbed into the car's long front seat. Among the many opulent features on display was a series of dashboard dials that accentuated the car's lavish aura. One of those dials inspired our 1920s Retrograde Watch, a genuinely unique timepiece that marries timeless style with modern technology.

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interlocutor. It's an amazing challenge, and you're showing that it works. We're trying to emulate that with many of the things we're doing.

When you're assessing progress made by VA and The American Legion, what would success look like?

The bottom line is that we won't rest until it's zero, right? That's what success looks like. And the clarity and the strength that comes from that goal is very motivating.

Let's talk about the PACT Act, signed in 2022. Where is VA on implementing new claims?

We're really excited about the PACT Act, and it would not have happened without the Legion and its members demanding that we make good on our promises to our vets. Since President Biden signed it, there's been more than a million PACT Act claims filed. Earned benefits to date under the act are more than $2.2 billion. And as of Sept. 10, more than 4.4 million vets have received toxic exposure screenings from their primary-care physician at VA, which allows us to find out if a veteran has a toxic exposure that's new to us. And as we get that additional information, we can work with that veteran to see what additional care they may need.

Because of this big influx, we are processing claims at a faster rate than ever. We have already, by August, processed 1.8 million claims this fiscal year. (VA finished the fiscal year with 1.98 million, 15.9% higher than the previous year.) And that's 100,000 more claims than we had filed last year, which was the largest number ever processed.

What should veterans know if they haven't already started the process?

We know there are millions more vets who meet the eligibility requirements of the law. We're urging them to visit **va.gov/pact**. Get with your American Legion service officers to file a claim. Let us get to work for you.

VA conducted its first National Buddy Check Week in October. What do you want veterans to take away from it and apply in the future?

What we've seen with The American Legion doing Buddy Checks the last several years is that it rekindles connections, and those connections are very meaningful for our vets.

I'm also confident we're going to see a follow-on effect, which is that the buddy who gets a call is going to think to himself, "OK, I hadn't thought of this. I'm going to call my buddy." And so there's a virtuous cycle.

This has been true at VA since our founding. We're watching and learning from our partners like the Legion, and just emulating what you're doing. The sky's the limit on what we're going to learn from this.

Women veterans face different issues than male veterans, such as a larger percentage of military sexual trauma cases, private access to some facilities and reproductive care. What strides are being made toward improving VA health care for women veterans?

We really appreciate the Legion challenging us to do more in this space – and not only challenging us, but also then pressing Congress to make sure that we're investing in new tools.

We're seeing really important progress on making sure we apply proven best practices across the system. Like in Minneapolis, where there will be a new women's health clinic at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. Our exam rooms are built so the woman veteran stays there, and the specialists cycle in, rather than making the veteran move through various levels and wards of the hospital.

Also, we are seeing substantial increases in funding for gender-specific care. That allows us to hire specialists of particular importance to women – gynecologists, for example – and to invest in technology vital to women veterans like mammography.

Lastly is investing in, and ensuring, specialists are co-located with other services around mental health for women veterans. We do this well in certain clinics like in Minneapolis and Gaithersburg, Md., where a woman veteran could go to one clinic, see a gender-specific provider, primary care, mental health, all in one stop.

Henry Howard is deputy director of the American Legion National Media & Communications Division.

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Task Force Movement adds health-care career portal

Legion-backed effort to close gaps in the economy grows.

Staff Sgt. Makayla Weaver, a medical technician with the 316th Surgical Operations Squadron, bandages a patient after administering a COVID-19 vaccine dose at Joint Base Andrews, Md., in 2021. DVIDS

Task Force Movement (TFM) has added a third pillar to its mission to fast-track veteran certification in specialized fields and help close critical gaps in the U.S. economy.

"We're facing a persistent shortage in medical personnel in the U.S. health system, which the COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated," TFM Chairman Patrick J. Murphy said after making the announcement that health care is joining commercial trucking and cybersecurity in the American Legion-supported mission. He announced the plan at a credentialing summit during the 104th American Legion National Convention in Charlotte, N.C.

"Military personnel have been shown to be invaluable during times of domestic emergencies," he said. "During the pandemic, thousands were deployed across the country to support hospitals and health systems during the surges and then to implement broad, sweeping vaccination plans. We, as a country, should be able to easily transform those coming out of the military with these skills to health-care positions we need to fill, by supporting the education, training and licensure of those who want to pursue much-needed positions."

TFM was launched by the Biden-Harris administration in April 2022 to help veterans quickly obtain commercial driving licenses (CDLs) and help reduce bottlenecks partly caused by a nationwide shortage of some 80,000 truckers.

At the 2022 American Legion National Convention in Milwaukee, TFM followed the push in trucking by opening a cybersecurity portal that seeks to fast-track veterans into a career field with some 750,000 vacancies.

Murphy says the task force's success depends on a diverse spectrum of stakeholders, including The American Legion, communicating with one another and sharing the same goals.

"We have made incredible strides," he said in Charlotte. "Over 300 partners within Task Force Movement, a $5 million drive for 500 scholarships for veterans and military spouses to get CDL licenses. Over $500,000 raised for other scholarships .... We were trying to soften pain points Americans are facing right now."

Murphy said TFM's success in trucking and cybersecurity led the administration to ask for the expansion to health care.

"We are 2 million health-care professionals short now, across America. Many of those are nurses, but we know that health care today is not episodic where you go once or twice a year to see a doctor. Health care is every single day – what you eat, how you exercise, are you sleeping well, those types of things."

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- Jeff Stoffer

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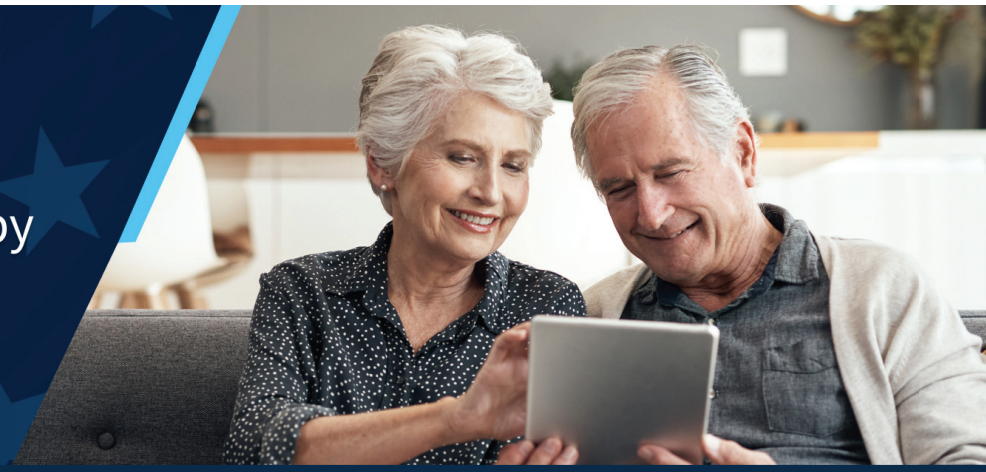

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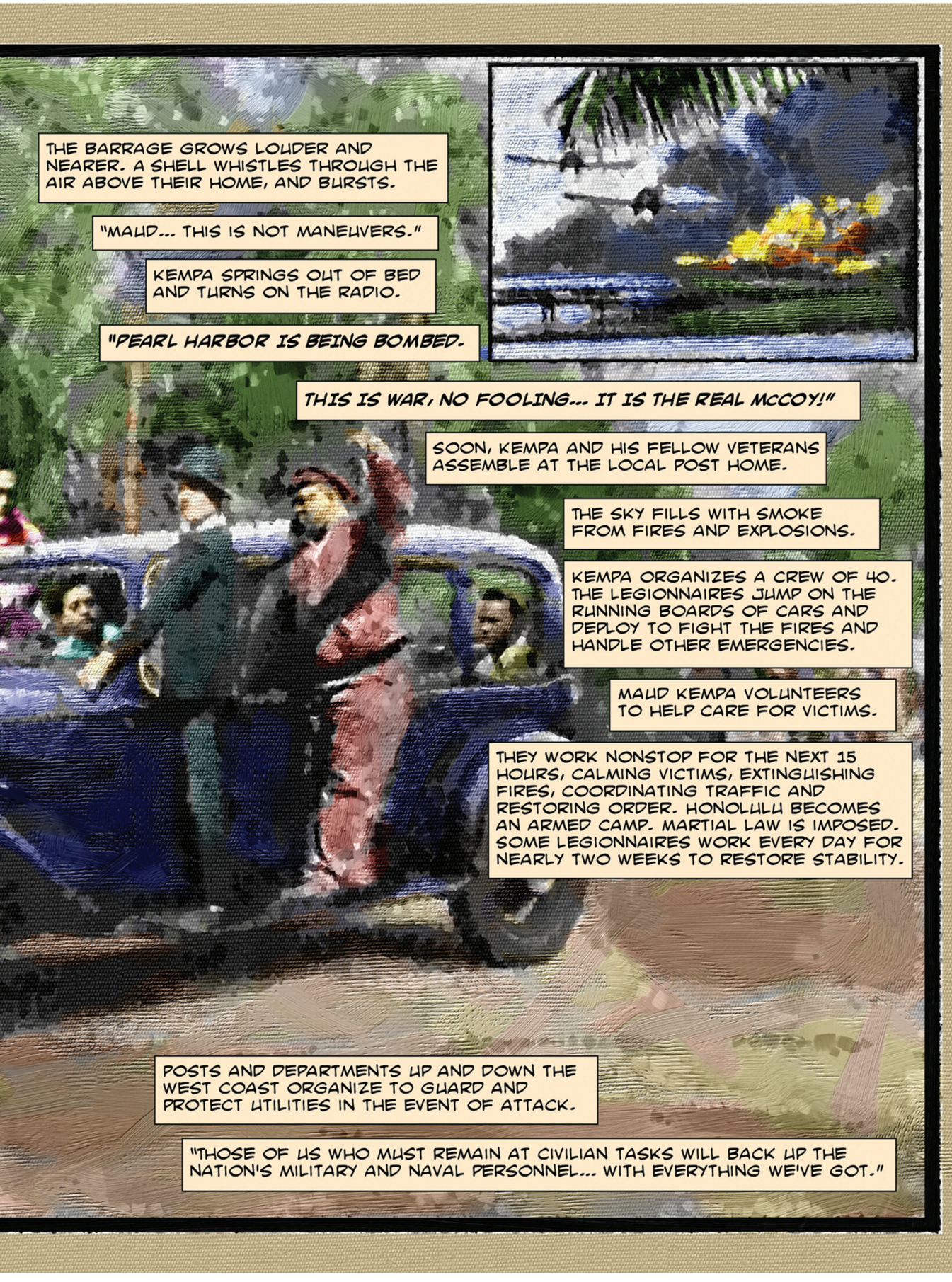
THE BARRAGE GROWS LOUDER AND NEARER. A SHELL WHISTLES THROUGH THE AIR ABOVE THEIR HOME, AND BURSTS.
"MAUD... THIS IS NOT MANEUVERS."
KEMPA SPRINGS OUT OF BED AND TURNS ON THE RADIO.
"PEARL HARBOR IS BEING BOMBED.
THIS IS WAR, NO FOOLING... IT IS THE REAL McCOY!"
SOON, KEMPA AND HIS FELLOW VETERANS ASSEMBLE AT THE LOCAL POST HOME.
THE SKY FILLS WITH SMOKE FROM FIRES AND EXPLOSIONS.
KEMPA ORGANIZES A CREW OF 40. THE LEGIONNAIRES JUMP ON THE RUNNING BOARDS OF CARS AND DEPLOY TO FIGHT THE FIRES AND HANDLE OTHER EMERGENCIES.
MAUD KEMPA VOLUNTEERS TO HELP CARE FOR VICTIMS.
THEY WORK NONSTOP FOR THE NEXT 15 HOURS, CALMING VICTIMS, EXTINGUISHING FIRES, COORDINATING TRAFFIC AND RESTORING ORDER. HONOLULU BECOMES AN ARMED CAMP. MARTIAL LAW IS IMPOSED. SOME LEGIONNAIRES WORK EVERY DAY FOR NEARLY TWO WEEKS TO RESTORE STABILITY.
POSTS AND DEPARTMENTS UP AND DOWN THE WEST COAST ORGANIZE TO GUARD AND PROTECT UTILITIES IN THE EVENT OF ATTACK.
"THOSE OF US WHO MUST REMAIN AT CIVILIAN TASKS WILL BACK UP THE NATION'S MILITARY AND NAVAL PERSONNEL... WITH EVERYTHING WE'VE GOT."

Photo by Hilary Ott

"It is Congress that has the constitutionally mandated responsibility to pass a budget, it is the president who has the constitutionally mandated responsibility to sign a budget, and it is The American Legion's constitutionally protected right to raise heck when they don't."

National Commander Dan Seehafer, addressing the American Legion National Executive Committee during Fall Meetings in Indianapolis in October. In his opening remarks, Seehafer spoke at length about the narrowly averted government shutdown at the end of September and re-emphasized the Legion's commitment to legislation that would ensure servicemembers (including the Coast Guard) would be paid even should a shutdown happen.

Department of Latin America

As approved by the NEC, the American Legion Department of Mexico is now the Department of Latin America. According to Resolution 16, "the Department of Mexico has developed American Legion posts in the sovereign countries of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador and Argentina," which identify themselves as Latin America. The name change is expected to enhance recruitment and post-establishment efforts by tapping into that regional identity.

1 in 3
Proportion of the 570,000 approved PACT Act-related claims filed through the middle of September, out of more than a million, that have come back with 0% ratings Source: Military.com

$238,750
Amount in Samsung American Legion scholarships awarded for 2023, to 91 scholarship recipients who attended the 2023 Boys State or Girls State sessions

Selected resolutions of the Fall Meetings

NATIONAL SECURITY

1 Urges assessment, modernization of North American Aerospace Defense Command

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

2 Urges DoD to ensure dependents can remain on their sponsor's TRICARE insurance until age 26 at no additional cost, akin to provisions granted to young adults under the Affordable Care Act

5 Urges Congress to pass legislation funding continued research of emerging therapies for veteran health

6 Urges Congress to mandate that separating servicemembers utilizing DoD mental health services or who are in need of additional support post-transition are made eligible to use VHA behavioral and mental health services for up to 12 months from their date of separation

7 Urges Congress to closely oversee the VA MISSION Act to ensure it is implemented in an open and transparent manner, and that the VHA remains at the center of care of the nation's veterans

8 Demands that VBA and VHA retroactively reopen all compensation or benefit claims that were closed, denied or neglected due to lack of accurate contact information

9 Encourages posts to host VA S.A.V.E. training classes

10 Opposes claims reviews by private companies

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

13 Urges Congress to direct all federal executive branch agencies involved in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to establish a private-public partnership to create a transition app to equip active-duty servicemembers and veterans with information on resources and benefits available to them

14 Urges Congress to increase funding to the Armed Forces Retirement Home to ensure its existence and growth

See all 25 resolutions at **archive.legion.org**.

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American Legion Family members place wreaths at Oak Grove Cemetery in Hillsdale, Mich.
Photo by Hilary Ott

A wreath for every veteran

Every December, for more than three decades, American Legion Family members have gathered with others in communities nationwide to "remember our fallen U.S. veterans, honor those who serve, and teach children the value of freedom" by placing wreaths on veterans' graves.

Dec. 16 will mark the 31st National Wreaths Across America (WAA) Day. Annually, more than 2 million wreaths are placed at some 4,000 locations in the United States and around the world, honoring veterans buried at those gravesites. This year's theme is "Serve & Succeed."

American Legion Family members have long supported WAA events throughout the country, participating in community events and even leading local efforts.

Some, like Wisconsin's American Legion Riders, have sponsored WAA wreath-layings for years. Since 2012, Riders from District 8 have coordinated efforts to place wreaths at the Central Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in King. And since 2018, they have raised enough funds to purchase wreaths for every grave there – more than 7,200.

American Legion Riders Ray and Evelyn McSherry serve as local coordinators for the event. Both members of the Palmer-Ritchie-Thomas Post 153 Legion Family, the pair call achieving a wreath for every gravesite "a dream come true."

In South Carolina, Jesse C. Lynch Memorial American Legion Post 71 in North Augusta started its first Wreaths Across America event by placing 200 wreaths at one cemetery. But last year, the post was part of a much larger collaborative effort that placed more than 4,000 wreaths at 38 cemeteries. Post 71 sponsored three of those cemeteries.

"Getting the community involved kind of gets you in the chest," says Ralph Wainwright, past commander of Post 71. "To see all the people in the community come out and support this program really makes you feel good. It's really rewarding."

After moving from Toledo, Ohio, to Hillsdale, Mich., Greg and Dianne Paul decided to bring WAA to their new city. After learning that no one there was familiar with the event, they began raising funds – enough to place more than 1,000 wreaths at two local cemeteries last December.

A member of Leighr A. Wright American Legion Post 53 in Hillsdale, Greg says Wreaths Across America events are a way to teach local youth about the sacrifice involved with military service.

"It matters to me," he says. "I'm a veteran – 11 years in the Air Force. It matters to me how we teach our children why we're here. How we got here. I think our kids … don't know what freedom is. It's a given that this is just what it is."

American Legion posts and Legion Family members participating in WAA events are encouraged to share their wreath-laying stories at **legiontown.org**.

– Steven B. Brooks

Learn more about WAA and get involved: ***wreathsacrossamerica.org***

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U.S. Army soldiers assigned to Alpha Company, 87th Division Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Division Sustainment Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division board a plane for deployment to the Middle East at Hunter Army Airfield in Georgia on March 24. U.S. Army photo

"Where's the outrage? Where's the revulsion? Where's the rejection? Where's the explicit condemnation of these horrors? We must affirm the right of any nation to defend itself and to prevent such harm from repeating itself. No member of this council – no nation in this entire body – could or would tolerate the slaughter of its people."

Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, addressing a U.N. Security Council session on Oct. 24. Blinken shared graphic accounts of Hamas militants murdering Israeli children and civilians in a surprise attack Oct. 7; more than 1,400 were killed, including at least 31 U.S. citizens. The Hamas-run health ministry says more than 4,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza. The United States put forward a resolution voicing sympathy for Israeli and Palestinian casualties and defending "the inherent right of all states to individual and collective self-defense" while complying with obligations under international law. Source: AFP

"We see a prospect for much more significant escalation against U.S. forces and personnel in the near term, and let's be clear about it, the road leads back to Iran."

A senior defense official speaking to Pentagon reporters, on the increase in attacks on U.S. military locations in the Middle East since the Israel-Hamas war began in October. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered new air defenses to the region to safeguard troops, including a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system. The United States has also sent warships and fighter aircraft, including two aircraft carriers, to try to deter Iran and Iran-backed groups. Source: Reuters

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87001

THE JOB FRONT BY WENDY S. ENELOW

Career storytelling as an interview strategy

Storytelling is one of the best ways to strengthen your interview performance. Shape the details of your career into interesting stories that communicate who you are and what you offer as they relate directly to the position. Stories are easy to remember; in turn, interviewers remember you.

There are three critical steps to career storytelling:

Prepare. Before every interview, closely review the job posting to determine key responsibilities of the position. Use that information to identify two to four of your top accomplishments, contributions, projects, commendations and more that demonstrate your proficiency and success in those functions. Write out your stories so you can practice them before each interview.

Use a story structure. Your stories should have three key components: the work situation, challenge or project; what you were responsible for and how well you did it; and the results you delivered. Here's a brief example from a job seeker who was asked if he had any experience in controlling engineering costs. Rather than a quick "yes," he responded with a story:

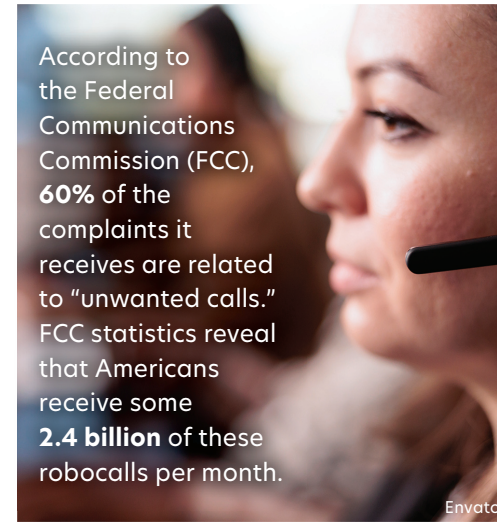
"When I arrived, they were plagued with huge engineering cost overrides. My team and I conducted an extensive root cause analysis, identified problem areas, implemented new technology and rebuilt the engineering workforce. This effort resulted in a 22% cost reduction in Year 1 with an additional 8% in Year 2."

Be succinct. Your career stories must be short and to the point. Reread the example above and you'll see it's only three sentences. Write your stories down and then edit ruthlessly, multiple times if necessary. Keep your interviewer engaged with a quick (not fast) pace and many engaging stories.

A good story inspires action, which in this situation is either an invitation for a second interview or even a job offer. Once you have the job, continue to use storytelling to demonstrate your value during performance reviews and when being considered for promotions.

Also, storytelling is just as valuable when writing your résumé, LinkedIn profile and other career documents. Brevity is critical because of space limitations, but that doesn't lessen the power of your stories.

Wendy Enelow is co-author of "Modernize Your Résumé: Get Noticed … Get Hired" and other titles. **wendy@wendyenelow.com**


According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), **60%** of the complaints it receives are related to "unwanted calls." FCC statistics reveal that Americans receive some **2.4 billion** of these robocalls per month.
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MY GI BILL VETERANS & EDUCATION
BY VALERIE VIGIL

Active-duty orders while enrolled

Q: *I attend a Nebraska cosmetology school that provides training and education in beauty and personal care services. I receive my Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits for this course of study. Recently, I learned that my Army National Guard unit has been ordered to active duty for six months for an overseas humanitarian deployment. Since I have four months left to complete the cosmetology portion of the certificate program, what will happen to my VA education benefits while I am on orders?*

A: VA understands there are occasions when students must terminate enrollment due to mitigating circumstances. Notify the school and provide officials a copy of your orders so it may terminate your enrollment. Immediately after contacting the school, call VA and advise the veterans service representative (VSR) that you have been ordered to active duty. This will avoid any overpayment.

Valerie Vigil is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Apache Junction, Ariz. ***askvalerie@legion.org***

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ON POINT THE AMERICAN LEGION IN WASHINGTON

S. 2327/H.R. 4627 – AFGHAN ADJUSTMENT ACT

"The Afghan Adjustment Act would provide our Afghan allies with a safe haven in the United States, where they can rebuild their lives and continue to contribute to our country."

Letter to Congress from The American Legion and more than 25 other veterans service organizations calling for support, including Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) status, for Afghans who assisted U.S. forces and allies in the global war on terrorism

In August 2021, U.S. soldiers and Marines heroically evacuated tens of thousands of Afghan allies who fought with the United States and allies against the Taliban. Since then, more than 70,000 at-risk Afghans have been relocated to the United States, where they have been in legal limbo. Despite fleeing from the Taliban, most of them have had no direct pathway to lawful permanent residency and stability in the United States.

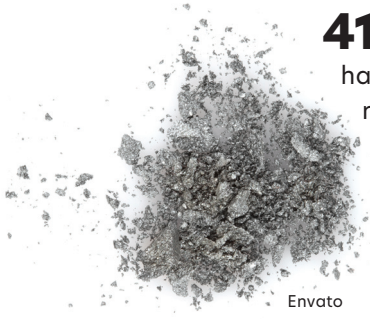
Last year Congress failed to pass the bipartisan Afghan Adjustment Act, which would provide access to a more streamlined and efficient lawful permanent-residency process. Without an adjustment act that creates this path, most Afghans would be forced to navigate the backlogged, complex and paperwork-intensive asylum process. Access to qualified and affordable legal representation, loss of critical documentation and required evidence during the hurried evacuation, and backlogs in processing have created significant barriers that make the immigration process seem impossible.

In 2023 Congress reintroduced the Afghan Adjustment Act, but time is running out to grant U.S. allies a path to permanent residency and stability.

The Afghan Adjustment Act would:

- Allow Afghans on temporary humanitarian status in the United States who submit to additional security vetting and in-person interviews to apply for permanent legal status
- Establish an Interagency Task Force, responsible for creating and implementing a strategy to continue the relocation and resettlement of eligible Afghans over 10 years
- Require the State Department to respond to congressional inquiries related to SIV applications or U.S. Refugee Admissions Program referrals
- With no operational embassy in Afghanistan, require the State Department to implement an office to review visa applications and provide other consular services for Afghans
- Expand SIV eligibility for Afghans who worked with and served alongside U.S. forces, including Afghan National Army Special Operations Command, Afghan Air Force, Female Tactical Teams and others

The American Legion Grassroots Action Center provides a quick, efficient way to deliver messages of support for the Afghan Adjustment Act to members of Congress. Scan this QR code with the camera on your smartphone, or go to **legion.org/legislative** and click on the Grassroots Action Center box.



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412 Items imported from the United States and allied countries on which China has at least a **70%** dependence, at a value of roughly **$47 billion** annually. China relies on the United States, South Korea and Japan for silver powder, which is key to solar-panel manufacturing. It also relies on Australia, Canada and Britain for **86%** of its nickel powder and nickel flakes, used to make batteries and electrical components, and on the United States for about two-thirds of its grain sorghum, used to produce the Chinese alcohol known as "baijiu."

Sources: *The Wall Street Journal*, Center for Strategic and International Studies

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BERGMANN & MOORE: CAMP LEJEUNE JUSTICE ACT

Continued awareness on Camp Lejeune litigation

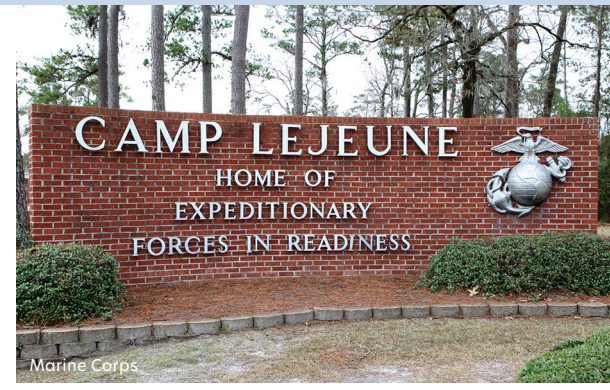
To date, nearly 100,000 claimants have filed administrative claims related to the Camp Lejeune Justice Act (CLJA). As interest remains high, here are answers to some frequently asked questions from Bergmann & Moore, a national law firm that has served as The American Legion's training and litigation partner over the past seven years.

Will an award made under the Camp Lejeune Act reduce my monthly VA benefits payments? No. VA is on the record stating that ongoing VA disability benefit payments will not be reduced by awards received under the CLJA. We are watching this issue carefully, however, as we know how important this is to Legion members.

May I file a VA disability claim at the same time I file a CLJA claim? Yes. To file a VA disability claim. you should contact your American Legion representative. To file a CLJA claim (which is a one-time lump sum benefit), you can use the landing page at **camplejeunelitigationteam.com/al** or call **(800) 898-9450**. Be sure to let the person you talk to know you are a Legion member.

I have a family member who died at Camp LeJeune. Can I file on their behalf? Yes, survivors and loved ones may bring an action so long as they are an appointed representative of that person.

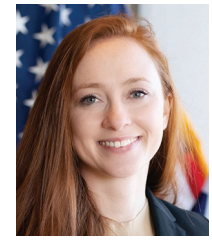
What are attorney fees and costs related to a CLJA claim? We believe veterans shouldn't be charged unreasonable legal fees, especially ones with added "costs" that can easily amount to over 50% of a veteran's award. The American Legion has teamed up with Bergmann & Moore to help members navigate CLJA. Importantly, a legal fee includes attorney fees and costs. B&M's fees/costs are limited to 33.33%. Notably, this fee is a hard cap. That means no additional "costs" will be added on top of the fee. This arrangement is different from many other firms, which charge a set attorney fee plus "costs" that are not determined until after the litigation. Claimants should understand what their law firm is charging them for representation.



Marine Corps

What can I do if I have lost confidence in the firm I previously signed and/or believe the firm is charging too much? What is the process to change? Firms cannot hold clients hostage. A simple communication in writing is all that is necessary: "I wish to discharge you as my attorney in my CLJA claim. Please return all documents I submitted." A response from the firm is not necessary. Rather, a copy of your letter simply needs to be sent to the new firm, which will ensure you will not have to pay the original firm.

I am quite ill and may not be here to collect any award if the case drags on. Will my family be able to collect on my behalf? Yes. To submit an administrative claim for a client acting as an agent for another, documentation showing authority must be submitted. A valid power of attorney or similar document conferring authority is required for someone living. For deceased claimants, state law varies on what authority (small estate affidavit, full probate, etc.) is necessary to ensure the client representative is the proper party and has authority to file suit.



The American Legion is committed to keeping its members up-to-date as the landscape of CLJA changes. Veterans, family members and persons affected by contaminated water at Camp Lejeune are encouraged to consult Legion-accredited service officers about the lawsuit. If you have any questions about filing a claim, contact Elizabeth Hartman, Bergmann & Moore's CLJA liaison with The American Legion, at **(202) 497-7255** or **lhartman@vetlawyers.com**.

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Reduces the risk of infections?	**YES** More than 5 million Men's Liberty units have been sold, with reduced risk of infections or skin injuries	**NO** High incidence of diaper rash, sores, yeast infections and dermatitis
Invisible under clothing?	**YES** Men's Liberty is unnoticeable — only you know it's there	**NO** Awkward diapers can be ill-fitting, bulky and uncomfortable
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[1]Vaughan CP, Johnson TM 2nd, Goode PS, Redden DT, Burgio KL, Markland AD. Military exposure and urinary incontinence among American men. J Urol. 2014 Jan; 191(1):125-9. doi: 10.1016/j.juro.2013.07.016. Epub 2013 Jul 16. PMID: 23871759.

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FOCUS ON FINANCES BY J.J. MONTANARO

The gift of a financial future

I still remember the conversation my brother and I had around this time of the year when my children were in elementary school. He wanted to be a good uncle but bemoaned the idea of giving my kids a bunch of soon-to-be forgotten toys. That year he launched a gift-giving campaign of buying stocks instead of transitory toys that is still paying dividends – literally – two decades later. While the kids weren't initially excited about the program, when they hit 21 and it came time to reap the rewards, they became believers.

As you think about the children on your gift list this year, consider a similar switch. They may react like my kids did, but down the road I bet they will thank you for your thoughtfulness. Here are five ideas as you weigh this approach:

Equity ownership Like my brother did, buy the recipient a stock – and maybe even order and frame the certificate. It's never too early to drive home the idea of investing for the future, and giving a stock provides a great teaching opportunity. You can walk into a familiar store or business with the child and let them know they have an ownership stake.

Uncle Sam's savings bonds These old standbys are still available, but not in the paper form I received as a child. Today you buy the bonds electronically at **treasurydirect.gov**, and the recipient will need to open an electronic account to hold them. You also can buy "I bonds," a type of savings bond that offers an inflation-linked return.

529 college savings plans College costs continue to soar, as does the debt load of recent graduates. Fight that trend by setting up or contributing to a child's 529 college savings plan. These accounts offer a ton of flexibility and some exciting tax benefits. Recent tax law changes even allow for unused 529 plan funds to be rolled over into a Roth IRA.

Savings accounts These accounts are a basic building block of your financial foundation. They are not a bad place to launch a child's efforts either. With your own kids, you could set up some sort of matching program to encourage them to make contributions to their own savings accounts.

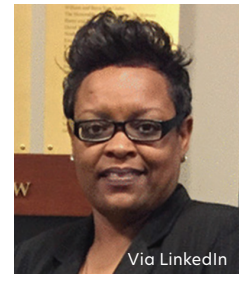
Roth IRAs This gift only works if the child is older and has what the IRS terms "compensation" – wages, tips or self-employment income. But as a long-term project, the potential for decades of tax-free compounding could be attractive.

Whether it's one of these ideas or another, you have the power to transform your gifts into something truly meaningful.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. ***legion.org/usaa***

Woman spends 16 years trying to prove she's alive

Madeline-Michelle Carthen has been trying to prove she's not dead for 16 years. As NBC News reports, she learned of her "death" while applying to a college intern exchange program, when she was informed that her Social Security number was associated with the name of a deceased person.


Via LinkedIn

Carthen responded, "What do you mean? I'm sitting right here. I've been at school over a year and a half .... How am I dead?"

It has been a yearslong ordeal for Carthen, who was forced to withdraw from school and has had cars repossessed, been dismissed from jobs and even been evicted from her home due to her "death."

When Carthen contacted the Social Security Administration, she was informed that her name and Social Security number had been added to the agency's "death master file" by mistake.

"It got worse," she explained to NBC, "because ... it went to the IRS, it went to the Department of Homeland Security, it went to E-Verify."

Carthen – who has legally changed her name, filed a federal lawsuit against the Social Security Administration, submitted countless documents to the agency and contacted four U.S. presidents for relief – still doesn't know how her name was placed on the "death master file."

Change-proof your family's future

In life, change comes quickly. By planning, you can help your family live better in the midst of new circumstances.

Goals Think about goal-setting as though you are purchasing a gift for a family member at a clothing store: One size does not fit all in the area of clothes, or for your family and estate plan. Decide the right times and amounts for inheritances to your children, nephews and nieces. Other goals may include the age for heirs to receive property, and reducing costs and death taxes.

What do you own? Can you make a list of all the property you own, and those with whom you own it? Understanding your property starts with listing all your assets, including savings accounts, certificates of deposit, home, IRA, 401(k) and personal assets.

Dependents For parents with minor children, a key decision is selecting a guardian. Minor children also need to have property held in trust for appropriate investment and expenditure of funds.

Wills and trusts Do you have a will, and if so, is it current? Review your will periodically and discuss it with your attorney. Because a will does not provide for your care in a medical emergency, your estate plan should include durable power of attorney for health care and a living will to handle end-of-life issues.

Planning for probate Upon death, a person's property must first be used to pay bills, expenses and debts. The probate process specifically applies to assets transferred under your will. But many types of assets are transferred through means other than wills. All parts of your plan need to work together to prevent – among other problems – expensive, heart-rending fights among your heirs over property.

For questions about estate planning, contact the Legion's Office of Charitable Giving at **(317) 630-1225**, **plannedgiving@legion.org** or **legion.giftlegacy.com**, where you can also sign up for the Planned Giving e-newsletter.

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STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE

2. Publication Number: 0886-1234

3. Date of filing: September 28, 2023

4. Frequency of issue: Monthly

5. No. of issues published annually: 12

6. Annual subscription price: $3.00

7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, Indiana 46216 (Marion County)

8. Complete mailing address of headquarters of general business offices of the publisher: 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

9. Names and addresses of publisher, editor and managing editor:

Publisher: Jeffrey Stoffer, 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Editor: Jeffrey Stoffer, 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Managing Editor: Matt Grills, 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

10. Owner: The American Legion Headquarters, 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

11. Known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None

12. Tax Status: The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes have not changed during the preceding 12 months.

13. Publication Title: The American Legion Magazine

14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: September 2023

15. Extent and nature of circulation:

	Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
a. Total number of copies printed	1,548,782	1,532,082
b. Paid and/or requested circulation		
1.Paid/Requested outside-county subscriptions stated on Form 3541	1,536,282	1,511,218
2. Paid in-county subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales, and other non-USPS paid distribution	4,635	4,621
4. Other classes mailed through the USPS	0	0
c. Total paid and/or requested circulation *(Sum of 15b (1),(2),(3), and (4))*	1,540,917	1,515,839
d. Free distribution by mail		
1. Outside-county as stated on Form 3541	4,546	4,681
2. In-county as stated on Form 3541	0	0
3.Other classes mailed through the USPS	0	0
e. Free distribution outside the mail	0	0
f. Total Free distribution *(Sum of 15d and 15e)*	4,546	4,681
g. Total distribution *(Sum of 15c and 15f)*	1,545,463	1,520,520
h. Copies not distributed	3,320	11,562
i. Total (Sum of 15g and h)	1,548,782	1,532,082
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	99.71	99.69

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete.

Jeffrey Stoffer, Publisher

How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information online at **legion.org/reunions**.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and email address.

Notices remain online until the final day of the reunion. Allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing twice a year.**

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, phone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org**.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

USAFSS/ESC, St. Augustine, FL, 1/25-28, Jay Johnson, (321) 537-7871, jay.johnson1943@gmail.com

COAST GUARD

***Glacier* WAGB 4 & All Icebreaker Sailors,** Mystic, CT, 9/20-22, Sharon Ingram, (717) 926-5214, shingram1@live.com; ***Storis* WAGL/WAG/WAGB/WMEC 38,** Duluth, MN, 6/2-5, Greg Papineau, (907) 539-6494, g.papineau907@gmail.com; ***Westwind* WGB 281,** Linthicum Heights, MD, 9/20-22, Frank Roberts, (910) 279-0823, froberts58@gmail.com

MARINES

Alpha Co 1st Bn 5th Mar Rgt, Haslet, TX, 7/3-5, Vince Rios, (817) 847-9954, vrmarine@msn.com

NAVY

***Donner* LSD 20,** Gettysburg, PA, 4/22-24, Dennis Heimbach, (610) 775-7539, dennisheimb@gmail.com; ***John Paul Jones* DD 932 / DDG 32 & 53,** Jacksonville, FL, 4/8-12, Ray Schmidt, (716) 200-8511, landau365@yahoo.com; **Navy Deep Submergence Grp Assn,** Silverdale, WA, 9/27-29, Stan Reinhold, (623) 332-1764, stanreinhold@gmail.com; ***Savage* DE/DER 386,** Rapid City, SD, 9/23-28, Tom Hendricks, (406) 788-1399, tjhendricks33@gmail.com; ***Spinax* SS 489,** North Little Rock, AR, 5/14-16, Jack Thormahlen, (512) 913-4861, eht_jlt@yahoo.com

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Post 12, IN: Jeffrey A. Anderson, Steven C. Bennett, Gary L. Decker

IN SEARCH OF

2nd Msl Bn 82nd Arty Corporal Missile (Kitzingen, Germany, 1961-1963), Michael DeTorie, (443) 825-6239

613th Field Service Co 242nd Supply & Service Bn (Munich, Germany, 1966-1968), Peter Chisholm, (508) 294-0421, pchisholm@framingham.edu

835th Air Police Sqdn (McConnell AFB, KS, 1963-1965), Ron Windsor, (813) 539-0586, windsor-ron41@gmail.com

A Btry 3/67th ADA (Giebelstadt, Germany, 1971-1975), Ronald Halverson, acehunt70@gmail.com

A Co Plt 1013 1st Recruit Tng Bn (MCRD Parris Island, SC, May 1981), Bill Butler, (609) 674-6518, bbutler1983@gmail.com

***Coral Sea* CVA 43 Torpedo Shop (1956),** Walter Chrastina, (704) 876-2312), wchrastina@aol.com

TAPS

Joel M. Hauck, Dept. of Missouri. Dept. Cmdr. 1996-1997.

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Popular CoQ10 Pills Leave Millions Suffering

Could this newly-discovered brain fuel solve America's worsening memory crisis?

PALM BEACH, FLORIDA — Millions of Americans take the supplement known as CoQ10. It's the coenzyme that supercharges the "energy factories" in your cells known as *mitochondria*. But there's a serious flaw that's leaving millions unsatisfied.

As you age, your mitochondria break down and fail to produce energy. In a revealing study, a team of researchers showed that 95 percent of the mitochondria in a 90-year-old man were damaged, compared to almost no damage in the mitochondria of a 5-year-old.

Taking CoQ10 alone is not enough to solve this problem. Because as powerful as CoQ10 is, there's one critical thing it fails to do: it can't create new mitochondria to replace the ones you lost.

And that's bad news for Americans all over the country. The loss of cellular energy is a problem for the memory concerns people face as they get older.

"We had no way of replacing lost mitochondria until a recent discovery changed everything," says Dr. Al Sears, founder and medical director of the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Palm Beach, Florida. "Researchers discovered the only nutrient known to modern science that has the power to trigger the growth of new mitochondria."

Why Taking CoQ10 is Not Enough

Dr. Sears explains, "This new discovery is so powerful, it can multiply your mitochondria by 55 percent in just a few weeks. That's the equivalent of restoring decades of lost brain power."

This exciting nutrient — called PQQ *(pyrroloquinoline quinone)* — is the driving force behind a revolution in aging. When paired with CoQ10, this dynamic duo has the power to reverse the age-related memory losses you may have thought were beyond your control.

Dr. Sears pioneered a new formula — called **Ultra Accel II** — that combines both CoQ10 and PQQ to support maximum cellular energy and the normal growth of new mitochondria. **Ultra Accel II** is the first of its kind to address both problems and is already creating huge demand.

Over 47 million doses have been shipped to men and women across the country and sales continue to climb for this much sought-after brain fuel. In fact, demand has been so overwhelming that inventories repeatedly sell out. But a closer look at **Ultra Accel II** reveals there are good reasons why sales are booming.

Science Confirms the Many Benefits of PQQ

The medical journal *Biochemical Pharmacology* reports that PQQ is up to 5,000 times more efficient in sustaining energy production than common antioxidants. With the ability to keep every cell in your body operating at full strength, **Ultra Accel II** delivers more than just added brain power and a faster memory.

People feel more energetic, more alert, and don't need naps in the afternoon. The boost in cellular energy generates more power to your heart, lungs, muscles, and more.

"With the PQQ in Ultra Accel, I have energy I never thought possible at my age," says Colleen R., one of Dr. Sears's patients. "I'm in my 70s but feel 40 again. I think clearly, move with real energy and sleep like a baby."

The response has been overwhelmingly positive, and Dr. Sears receives countless emails from his patients and readers. "My patients tell me they feel better than they have in years. This is ideal for people who are feeling old and run down, or for those who feel more forgetful. It surprises many that you can add healthy and productive years to your life simply by taking **Ultra Accel II** every day."

You may have seen Dr. Sears on television or read one of his 12 best-selling books. Or you may have seen him speak at the 2016 WPBF 25 Health and Wellness Festival in South Florida, featuring Dr. Oz and special guest Suzanne Somers. Thousands of people attended Dr. Sears's lecture on anti-aging breakthroughs and waited in line for hours during his book signing at the event.

Will Ultra Accel II Multiply Your Energy?

Ultra Accel II is turning everything we thought we knew about youthful energy on its head. Especially for people over age 50. In less than 30 seconds every morning, you can harness the power of this breakthrough discovery to restore peak energy and your "spark for life."

So, if you've noticed less energy as you've gotten older, and you want an easy way to reclaim your youthful edge, this new opportunity will feel like blessed relief.

The secret is the "energy multiplying" molecule that activates a dormant gene in your body that declines with age, which then instructs your cells to pump out fresh energy from the inside-out. This growth of new "energy factories" in your cells is called mitochondrial biogenesis.

MEMORY-BUILDING SENSATION: Top doctors are now recommending new Ultra Accel II because it restores decades of lost brain power without a doctor's visit.

Instead of falling victim to that afternoon slump, you enjoy sharp-as-a-tack focus, memory, and concentration from sunup to sundown. And you get more done in a day than most do in a week. Regardless of how exhausting the world is now.

Dr. Sears reports, "The most rewarding aspect of practicing medicine is watching my patients get the joy back in their lives. **Ultra Accel II** sends a wake-up call to every cell in their bodies… And they actually feel young again."

And his patients agree. "I noticed a difference within a few days," says Jerry from Ft. Pierce, Florida. "My endurance has almost doubled, and I feel it mentally, too. There's a clarity and sense of well-being in my life that I've never experienced before."

How To Get Ultra Accel II

This is the official nationwide release of **Ultra Accel II** in the United States. And so, the company is offering a special discount supply to anyone who calls during the official launch.

An Order Hotline has been set up for local readers to call. This gives everyone an equal chance to try **Ultra Accel II**. And your order is backed up by a no-hassle, 90-day money back guarantee. No questions asked.

Starting at 7:00 AM today, the discount offer will be available for a limited time only. All you have to do is call TOLL FREE **1-800-804-0331** right now and use promo code **AMLUA1123** to secure your own supply.

Important: Due to **Ultra Accel II** recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back.

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That guy who stole an Advent calendar got only 25 days.

A BOY secretly followed a department store Santa to the changing room. The man came out in his street clothes, ready to go home. The boy yelled, "I knew it."

Nervously, the man asked, "Knew what?"

Smiling ear to ear, the boy leaned in close and whispered, "I knew that Santa wouldn't be able to keep an eye on all the girls and boys without a secret identity."

The man smiled. "Don't tell anyone."

The boy nodded enthusiastically, "I won't, San ...." He paused, then looked around quickly before adding, "I mean, Kris Kringle."

WHAT'S the Grinch's favorite band? The Who.

A WIFE called her husband at work. "Have you ever experienced piercing pain all over your body? As if somebody had a voodoo doll of you and was sticking pins into it?"

"Um ... no, not really," he replied, confused.

"Interesting," she said. "What about now?"

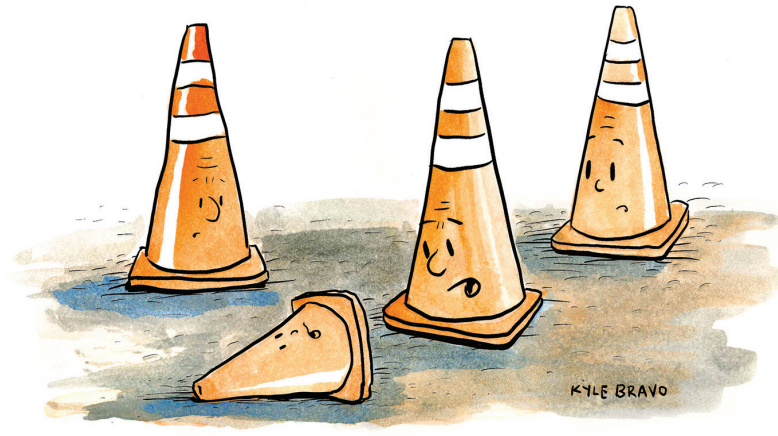
THREE MICE walked into a bar. The first mouse said, "When I see a mousetrap, I lie on my back and set it off with my foot. When the bar comes down, I catch it with my teeth, bench-press it 20 times to work up an appetite and make off with the cheese."

The second mouse responded, "Yeah, well, when I see poison, I collect as much I can, take it home and grind it into a powder. Then I mix it into my coffee so I can get a good buzz for the rest of the day."

The third mouse suddenly looked at his watch and said, "Gotta go. I have a date with the cat."

A PHOTOGRAPHER was hired to take pictures at a lawyers' convention. After lining everyone up for a group shot, he shouted, "On the count of three, everyone say, 'Fees!'"

"REMEMBER that the important thing is not what you give, or how you wrap it. The important thing, during this very special time of year, is that you save the receipt." – *Dave Barry*



"Heeeeelp! Somebody heeeeelp!"

"Your business model simply isn't sustainable."

"Last Christmas, some fat guy in a red suit got past me. Not this year!"

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